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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: promoting full employment and decent work for all

Statement submitted by Unitarian Universalist Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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Statement

1. On the occasion of the 45th Commission's theme of "Promotion of Full Employment and Decent Work for All," members of the NGO community working for AIDS competence believe that *social capital and human capacity development* should be given special emphasis in especially in countries where HIV/AIDS is rampant.

2. Relevant to the priority theme of the CSD, the NGOs endorsing this statement, Emphasize that

- The decent work and employment agenda must further implement the 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on the need to put people at the centre of development. National efforts need to address more effectively, in formal and informal employment settings, the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic with provisions of education, training and prevention programmes, full employment and the fostering of social integration to enhance human capacity and facilitate destigmatisation and equitable access to care and support services.

- Decent work agenda must advance people's rights to participate and freedom to regain confidence assuming responsibility for care and prevention, addressing vulnerability, and utilising human strengths in family, local neighbourhood and workplace for a hopeful future. Consistent with a human development framework, these achievements will enhance the learning and sharing of human knowledge and experience to strengthen platforms for policy determination. Member states must ensure the promotion of decent work that contributes to both human capacity development and economic growth.

3. We share concerns with the International Labour Organization that

The global HIV/AIDS pandemic jeopardizes the achievement of the goals set by the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) and threatens every aspect of the Decent Work Agenda.[1] Nine out of ten people living with HIV/AIDS are of working age and have faced further deficits, gaps and exclusions in the form of unemployment and underemployment, poor equality and unproductive jobs, unsafe work and insecure income, deprivation of basic rights, gender disparities, exploitation of migrant workers and child labour, lack of representation and voice, and inadequate protection and solidarity, disability and old age.[2]

4. With this in mind, we express specific concern that

HIV/AIDS dramatically impacts poorer communities where social conditions of poverty increase vulnerability to infection. The epidemic deprives communities of the already scanty resources of households, and dismantles potential community resources of donated labor, knowledge and skills. The epidemic further undermines community family cohesion and the livelihood of millions of workers and their dependents by reducing family income, threatening food security, increasing burden of care, and creating stigma and discrimination, especially for women.

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[1] Cravero, Kathleen of UNAIDS at the panel discussion at the NGO venue for the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the *Implementation of the Outcome of the WSSD.*, Geneva, 2000.

[2] "Decent Work – Safe work – HIV/AIDS" Decent work - the heart of social progress ILO Report for World Day for safety and Health at Work, Geneva, 2006.

5. Of particular concern, particularly in the context of sub-Saharan Africa, is the lack of attention to and knowledge of rural economies and the sustainability of vitality and viability of the agricultural sector and rural livelihoods. As rural economy has been a core base from which economic development can be sustained, continuing efforts to strengthen rural communities in the face of HIV/AIDS pandemic is critical.

6. Despite this context, success stories and progress recognized by UNAIDS have occurred in many countries.

7. **We urge member states to recognize that**

The approach, called *Human Capacity Development for AIDS Competence*, provides a knowledge management and sharing process that strengthens the development, monitoring and implementation of community programmes through multi-sectoral participation (i.e. UN agencies, media houses, schools, hospitals, industrial manufactures, leading musicians, government representatives, local and municipal authority heads, rural community representatives, people living with HIV/AIDS, medical professional, and others). This process of competencies through use of information, training, communication and innovative tools is to strengthen AIDS-related sociological elements within communities. The approach has been assessed and proven by UNAIDS in its cost-effectiveness and power to lift local confidence which leads to reduction of HIV infection within communities, increased confidence in behaviours, skills, access to services and general improvement in community elements.[3] As a result, better performing AIDS programmes within formal and informal settings lead to improved attitude towards people living with HIV/AIDS and increased involvement in community activities. Through self-assessment, workers can identify how HIV/AIDS relates to their life and families, and how its related issues affect their workplace and their work. In many countries, the process has generated an extremely valuable strategy by targeting existing development-business partnerships.[4]

8. Paul Hunt, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to health, maintains that facilitation of the active and informed participation of individuals and communities should be of priority in the development and implementation of national strategy.[5] Particular effort should stress on the participation of the most vulnerable groups within communities and the cultivation of partnerships in order to respond to a wider range of issues as well as utilise resources more effectively.[6] We share their beliefs that people's participation reflects the right to participate in economic and social development policies which will strengthen current national strategies in both formal and informal employment settings.

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[3] *Evaluation of the UNAIDS/UNITAR AIDS Competence Programme*, UNAIDS, June 2005.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Report to the Commission on Human Rights: Addendum on Mission to Mozambique, 4 January 2005, E/CN.4/2005/51/Add.2

[6] Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and Adult Education for Learning Societies, *Koia! Adult & Community Education (ACE) Action*, Issue 2, August 2004.

9. Building on such knowledge and practice, we call for the following urgent enabling conditions:

- **Multi-sectorality: All stakeholders in the world of work must take a more integrated and multi-sectoral approach to address both formal and informal employment sectors within community, to provide an ethical and legal framework to guide workplace policies and programmes and protect the rights of workers, to plan for the social and economic consequences of HIV/AIDS, to eliminate every form of discrimination against and isolation of those living with HIV/AIDS and to help ensure equitable access to prevention, care and treatment.**

- **National Facilitation Team: Human capacity development approach must be integrated into national strategic plans of action to improve communication, monitoring and reporting systems, and accountability to effectively provide communities with resources to share and learn from their experiences. National efforts must include expansion of technical assistance by donor agencies to promote a national facilitation team to sustain knowledge management and translate the learning into organizational practices.**

- **Involvement of vulnerable groups: Local, national, and regional forums for discussion of social protection dialogue for informal workers must include 'vulnerable' populations (i.e. rural poor, rural to urban migrants, people with disabilities and living with HIV/AIDS, and women and youth) to identify vulnerability, coping strategies, unmet needs and access to social protection schemes, including property ownership and inheritance rights of women for social protection, at community, local and national levels.**

- **Financing: Funding and resources must be allocated for human capacity development training to facilitate community ownership and to reveal community strength through facilitation and use of knowledge management assets with innovative processes and tools.**

- **Scaling up: Development agendas that have many ambitious donor-driven initiations, such as sector development and poverty reduction, must be harmonized with "*greater scaling up*" of HIV/AIDS human capacity development programs that focus on social capital, community participation, the development of human skills capacity, the effective use of human resources, and involvement of civil society for complementarity of action, and strengthening social accountability and advocacy systems.**

- **Public-private and tripartism: National efforts must advance tripartite structure and social dialogue to promote human capacity development, the building of partnerships, and the sharing of practices at all levels, including the bilateral and regional levels among the main stakeholders in the world of work. This partnership approach also addresses Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that strengthen the role of private sector information and communication technologies, and is open to every stakeholder in global and local development. ILO, through its co-sponsorship of UNAIDS, must play a meaningful role in developing community ownership for development through their**

provision of leadership and advocacy, which will strengthen the basis for partnerships with the other co-sponsors and organizations of the UN as a whole.

Note:

Statement endorsed and supported by Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace, Salvation Army and UNANIMA International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council